'Ilm al-Rijal

A Reading from the Imams' Lens



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In thawab of
A certain servant of al-Zahra’
My constant source of inspiration
In serving the masters if the Ahlulbayt

May the Ahlulbayt bless them and all believers

Introduction

Role of Shi'i Ahadith

Twelver Shi'ism, as a denomination of Islam, believes that worship of Allah and implementing his laws is derived from two major sources:

- The Holy Book, the Quran
- Traditions (ahadith) of the Prophet Muhammad

Like most other sects, Shi'ism believes the Quran is best understood and propagated by the Holy Prophet who had direct communication with God.

Different perspectives also point to the Prophet's words as being the **only** source to understand the Quran.

Unlike other sects however, **Shi'ism does not believe the Prophet ceased teaching and giving judgements after his physical death.**

In a *sahih* hadith (Mir'at al-Uqul, vol 3, page 107), Zurara narrates the following from Imam al-Baqir:

(Al-Kafi, vol 1, page 255)

"*I heard Abu Jaa'far, peace be upon him, say:*

If it were not for the fact that we are increased in knowledge (by receiving wahi), we would have ran out (by giving detailed answers).

I said: ***Are you adding something that the Messenger of God, may God's prayers and peace be upon him and his family, does not know?***

He (the Imam) said: As for that, any knowledge is first presented to the Messenger of God, may God's prayers and peace be upon him

and his family, then to the Imams (one by one), till the matter ends with us (the present Imam)"

محمد بن يحيى، عن أحمد بن محمد، عن ابن أبي نصر، عن ثعلبة، عن زرارة قال: سمعت أبا جعفر عليه السلام يقول: لولا أنا نزداد لأنفدنا، قال: قلت: تزدادون شيئا لا يعلمه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله؟ قال: أما إنه إذا كان ذلك عرض على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله ثم على الأئمة ثم انتهى الامر إلينا.

Thus, if the ummah needs any knowledge or judgement not offered by the Messenger in his lifetime.

The Prophet's appointed successors, the Imams, supernaturally receive new knowledge and judgement regarding such a matter.

They do not receive the knowledge directly, Allah first reveals it to the Holy Prophet, then his Imam successors one by one, till it reaches the present Imam.

Thus, any knowledge presented by the Imam is derived from the Prophet (through wahi, divine inspiration) - even if Rasul Allah never gave this knowledge in his lifetime.

Upon this principle, **the Imams can even abrogate commands given by the Prophet during his lifetime.**

But it would not be the Imams superseding the Prophet. Rather, it it would be as if the Prophet himself abrogated his own commands. As all the Imams knowledge is directly derived from the Prophet, even if he never said it while alive.

(Al-Kafi, vol 1, page 64)

"*On the authority of Muhammad ibn Muslim, on the authority of Abu Abdullah, peace be upon him,*

I said to him (the Imam): What is the matter with people who narrate on the authority of so-and-so from the Messenger of God, peace and blessings be upon him and his family - and are not accused of lying - yet something contradictory to it comes from you?

He (the Imam) said: ***The hadith is abrogated just as the Qur'an is abrogated."***

العدة، عن أحمد بن محمد، عن عثمان بن عيسى، عن أبي أيوب الخزاز عن محمد بن م
سلم، عن أبي عبد الله عليه السلام قال: قلت له: ما بالأقوام يروون عن فلان وفلان عن ر
سول الله صلى الله عليه وآله لا يتهمون بالكذب فيجيئ منكم خلافه؟ قال: إن الحديث ين
سخ كما ينسخالقرآن.

Therefore, the words (traditions) of the Imam in Shi'ism is equal to the Prophet's words.

Because they are the medium by which Prophet actively continues to preach and teach the ummah.

(Bihar al-Anwar, vol 16, page 16)

"***We (the Ahlulbayt) are from one Light, and our Spirit is by the command of Allah.***

The first of us is Muhammad, the middle of us is Muhammad, the last of us is Muhammad.

And we are all Muhammad"

وكلنا واحد من نور واحد وروحنا من أمر الله، أولنا محمد وأوسطنا محمد وآخرنا محمد وكلنا محمد.

As such, the words of our Imams are treated as if they are the Prophet's words. And they are preserved as such.

The manner of such preservation will be clarified in the next subsection.

Why Ilm al-Rijal?

When one mentions their great-great-grandfather for example as having said something, it is not possible to have heard these words directly.

Because we were not alive in their lifetime. Thus, there must be a link between the person and their great-great-grandfather, to have knowledge of those words.

The link, otherwise known as *isnad* إسناد in Arabic or **chain of transmission** in English, is the one informing one of this knowledge.

In the case of the great-great grandfather, the chain of transmission would be one's grandfather who was alive at the time of this incident.

Yet, however, we cannot take the grandfather's account to the highest degrees of accuracy.

Absent-mindedness (forgetfulness) is a real problem, so is the problem of exaggeration and our minds recollecting events differently after many years.

However, what if the grandfather wrote down in a notebook the exact saying of his great-grandfather when the speech took place?

There would be flaws, but preservation will be much more accurate.

Thus, our Imams intended for the Shi'a to preserve their ahadith in higher degrees of accuracy than their Sunni interlocutors by telling the Shi'a to write down their ahadith instead of simply narrating them orally (as Sunnis have done):

(Al-Kafi, vol 1, page 51)

"*I heard Abi Abdillah (al-Sadiq) say:*

"Write (your ahadith), as you do not truly remember until you write them down."

9 - الحسين بن محمد، عن معلى بن محمد، عن الحسن بن علي الوشاء، عن عاصم بن حميد عن أبي بصير قال: سمعت أبا عبد الله عليه السلام يقول: اكتبوا فإنكم لا تحفظون حتى تكتبوا.

Thus, the ahadith were narrated chiefly but not exclusively by a companion sharing his book of hadith to another companion - and giving ijaza (permission) to that companion to narrate it from him.

The following hadith demonstrates this:

(Al-Kafi, vol 1, page 51)

"I said to Abu al-Hasan al-Ridha, peace be upon him:

A man from among our companions gives me a book and does not say: 'Narrate it from me'.

Am I permitted to narrate it from him?

He (the Imam) said: ***If you know that the book belongs to him, then narrate it from him"***

6 - عنه، بإسناده عن أحمد بن عمر الحلال قال: قلت لأبي الحسن الرضا عليه السلام: الرجل من أصحابنا يعطيني الكتاب ولا يقول: اروه عني يجوز لي أن أرويه عنه؟ قال: فقال: إذا علمت أن الكتاب له فاروه عنه.

Due to the fact, Shi'i traditions are written down - a logical reaction from an outsider would be:

If a hadith has flawed content, the flaw is deliberately presented from the narrator.

If a hadith has questionable content, it is much likelier that the narrator fabricated this. Because forgetfulness for example is not an excuse as the ahadith were directly written down.

Thus - our primary focus in accepting a hadith would be to evaluate whether narrator is either a wicked and liar, or trustworthy and righteous before accepting any hadith attributed to the Imam.

Right?

Not quite. It is possible for a narrator to lie, but did our Imams want us checking on a narrator's status before accepting a hadith?

Is it even possible to make such judgements on a narrator and his narrations?

What criteria did our Imams give to accept ahadith?

These questions, among others, will be presented and discussed in this booklet to evaluate the exact role of 'Ilm al-Rijal - the system of evaluating men in Islamic hadith science - in our acceptance of Shi'ism.

Accordingly, this paper will be divided into 3 sections:

(1) Acceptance of Hadith
(2) 'Ilm al-Rijal in our Imams' eyes
(3) What If a Narrator Lies / Conclusion

Bismillah

Acceptance of Hadith

Looking at Shi'i ahadith, the first thing to come to our attention is that there is a chain of transmission (generally speaking, but there are exceptions).

Such preponderance of chains being included in our ahadith is so conspicuous in our hadith corpus, such that the very notion of the chain must be based on a direct command of our holy Imams.

And indeed, it is so.

Imam al-Sadiq narrates from Amir al-Mu'mineen (a) that he said:

(Al-Kafi, vol 1, page 52)

"If I narrate to you a hadith, mention its isnad to the one who narrated it to you. If it were the truth, it is for you. If it were a lie, it goes against him"

The purpose of the isnad starts to become clearer now.

Upon close inspection, the hadith indicates that **the natural state** in approaching narrators of hadith **is assuming they are truthful**. This is the principle of ***Husn al-Dhan*** in Islam.

However, if it were a lie - it "goes against [them]" in that they they continue to receive great sin every time one reads and adopts the fabricated hadith.

Because by lying against the Imam, the narrator is lying against the Prophet - as the Imams are nothing but a medium for the Prophet to continue teaching, judging, and preaching after his physical death (as shown in the introduction).

And what is the punishment for a person who lies against the Holy Prophet?

The Prophet said:

(Wasa'il al-Shi'a, vol 12, page 249)

"***O Ali, whomever lies against me intentionally then he should prepare his position in hellfire***."

5 - محمد بن علي بن الحسين بإسناده عن حماد بن عمرو وأنس بن محمد، عن أبيه، عن جعفر بن محمد، عن آبائه - في وصية النبي (صلى الله عليه وآله) لعلى (عليه السلام) -: يا علي من كذب علي متعمدا فليتبوأ مقعده من النار

Essentially, the idea is that a Shi'i will not intentionally lie against the Prophet and thus the Imams.

Because the punishment for such a thing is beyond a lie about fallibles which Allah forgives easily.

Rather, lying about the Prophet removes you from Allah's mercy (i.e, cursed) and guarantees you hellfire. It is one of the kaba'ir (great sins).

If a Shi'i could lie about anyone, he would never intentionally lie upon the Prophet as he knows its consequences.

Thus we are to have Husn al-Dhan towards him when he says he heard something regarding the Prophet and Imams.

Knowing this, **is there a principle of our Imams regarding approaching ahadith with Husn al-Dhan?**

The answer is **yes**! It will be clarified in the following subsection.

<u>Ilm al-Rijal in our Imam's eyes</u>
'Ilm al-Rijal, an Invalid Premise

1. (Nahj al-Balagha, vol 2, page 24)

Imam Ali clarifies that one **must not** base one's judgement of a (Shi'i) brother based on what others say about his trustworthiness in religion and righteousness of path.

As what others say may be true, or it may be devastatingly wrong.

The Imam clarifies it is false to base one's judgement of a Shi'i brother based on what he heard. Rather, the judgement must be based on what one has seen with his own eyes:

"***O people, whoever knows from his brother a trustworthiness in religion and righteousness of path, <u>he should not hear the sayings of men in it.</u> As the archer may shoot his arches, but the arrows directed wrongly.***

..

Indeed, it is false for you to say: I heard, and the truth is for you to say: I saw."

قال: أيها الناس من عرف من أخيه وثيقة في (1) دين وسداد طريق فلا يسمعن فيه أقاويل الرجال أما إنه قد يرمى الرامي وتخطئ السهام، ويحيك (2) الكلام، وباطل ذلك يبور، والله سميع وشهيد (ألا إنه ما بين الحق والباطل) (3) إلا أربع أصابع، وجمع أصابعه ووضعها بين اذنه وعينه، ثم قال: الباطل أن تقول: سمعت، والحق أن تقول: رأيت.

2. (Al-Kafi, vol 2, page 358)

“*On the authority of Muhammad ibn Sinan, on the authority of Mufaddal Ibn Omar, he said: Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) said to me:*

***Whoever narrates upon a believer a narration by which he intends to disgrace him and destroy his honor in order to make him fall from the eyes of the people** (i.e, to give him a bad reputation).*

God will remove (this person) from his wilayah to the wilayah of Satan, such that even Satan will not accept him.”

محمد بن يحيى، عن أحمد بن محمد بن عيسى، عن محمد بن سنان، عن مفضل ابن عمر قال: قال لي أبو عبد الله (عليه السلام): من روى على مؤمن رواية يريد بها شينه وهدم مروءته ليسقط من أعين الناس أخرجه الله من ولايته إلى ولاية الشيطان فلا يقبله الشيطان.

- ***Evaluation***

Not only is it impermissible to hear the sayings of men regarding a Shi’i brother’s religion and righteous path. The mere fact such men narrate disreputing sayings or incidents attributed to a fellow Shi’i, this will be enough to remove such men from the wilayah (being among the followers) of Allah to the wilayah of Satan, such that even Satan will reject them.

This is reminiscent of how Satan will reject the people of hellfire who were under his wilayah, after previously inviting them to follow him:

“*The hypocrites are like the example of Satan when he says to man, "Disbelieve." But when he disbelieves, he says, "**Indeed, I am disassociated from you. Indeed, I fear Allah, Lord of the worlds**.” (59:16)*

3. (Al-Kafi, vol 2, page 361)

"*I heard Aba Abdilah [al-Sadiq] say:*

"Whomever accuses his brother with regards to his religion, there is no sanctity between them. *And whomever treats his (Shi'i) brother - the same [bad treatment he should give) the people (i.e, Mukhalifeen),* ***his faith disassociates from him"***

عدة من أصحابنا، عن أحمد بن محمد بن خالد، عن بعض أصحابه، عن الحسين ابن
حازم، عن حسين بن عمر بن يزيد، عن أبيه قال: سمعتأبا عبد الله (عليه السلام) يقول:
من اتهم أخاه في دينه فلا حرمة بينهما (4) ومن عامل أخاه بمثل ما عامل (5) به النا
س فهو بريء مما ينتحل (6).

- ***Evaluation:***

When one accuses his Shi'i brother with regards to his religion (for example, that is he is one of the Ghulat) - there is no sanctity between them.

Sanctity meaning; to respect, honor, and treat rightly with regards to your brother.

The Imam sees lack of sanctity as permissible towards the Mukhalifeen, but not towards a Shi'i brother.

Thus, if you accuse a Shi'i brother with regards to religion - you are removing the sanctity between you, and your faith (the accusor) disassociates from you.

4. (Al-Kafi, vol 8, page 147)

"*Sahl ibn Ziyad, on the authority of Yahya ibn Al Mubarak, on the authority of Abdullah ibn Jabla, on the authority of Muhammad ibn*

Al-Fudayl, on the authority of Abu Al-Hassan I (peace be upon him) who said:

I said to him [the Imam]: May I be sacrificed for you, a man from my brothers - I am informed about him ascribing to a the thing that I hate, so I ask him about it and he denies it.

However, a trustworthy people informed me of this information about him.

He [the Imam] said to me: ***O Muhammad, deny your hearing and your sight as liars - regarding your brother.***

Such that if 50 people testify (and swear by Allah) against him - and yet, he tells you a word [denying their claims about him], then believe him and claim they (the testifiers are liars).

Do not publicize/spread anything against him which brings him disgrace and and destroys his honor*, lest you be one of those whom God said in his book: Those who love that immorality spreads among those who believe will have a painful punishment"*

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سهل بن زياد، عن يحيى بن المبارك، عن عبد الله بن جبلة، عن محمد بن الفضيل، عن أبي الحسن الأول (عليه السلام) قال: قلت له: جعلت فداك الرجل من إخواني يبلغني ع نه الشئ الذي أكرهه فأساله عن ذلك فينكر ذلك وقد أخبرني عنه قوم ثقات فقال لي: يا محمدكذبسمعك وبصرك عن أخيك فإن شهد عندك خمسون قسامة (2) وقال لك قولا ف صدقه وكذبهم لا تذيعن عليه (3) شيئا تشينه (4) به وتهدمبهمروءته فتكون من الذين قا ل الله في كتابه: " إن الذين يحبون أن

- ***Evaluation:***

If a Shi'i brother denies something reported about him, one must believe him. As Imam al-Sadiq stated, that even if "50 people testify

and swear by Allah against him", one should believe his words over theirs'.

Publicizing and spreading anything against which brings him disgrace and destroys his honor is strictly forbidden.

For this reason, books on 'Ilm al-Rijal before al-Ghayba al-Kubra focused on simply stating the narrator and which Imam he was a companion with.

The best example of this would be Rijal al-Barqi, written even before al-Ghayba al-Sughra (as evident by companions of the Twelfth Imam not being included):

أصحاب أبي عبدالله جعفر بن محمد عليه السلام ١٢٩

٥٢. سِنان (١) بن [أبي] سنان. مولىٰ قريش، أبو: عبدالله.

٥٣. عليّ (٢) بن [أبي] المُغيرة (٣) الزبيديّ، الأزرق. كوفيّ.

٥٤. معمر (٤) بن يحيى بن سام (٥) الخزّاز. مولىٰ (٦)، كوفيّ.

٥٥. يوسف (٧) الطاطَريّ.

٥٦. زياد (٨) الحذّاء، أبو عُبَيدة. كوفيّ.

٥٧. كُلَيب (٩) بن معاوية الأسَديّ الصَيداويّ.

As we can see, very brief biographical data is included such as the narrator, his birth place, and Imam he was companions with.

No judgement on narrator whatsoever.

One may wonder why, however?

Why would the Imam make the word of one Shi'i enough to disqualify 50 other Shi'a testifying he (accused Shi'i) did something?

Well, it is because of the disasters that happened as scholars accused each other of heresy - out of malicious envy, or gross misunderstanding!

- (Rijal Ibn al-Ghada'iri)

"18 – Muḥammad b. Awrama, Abū Jaʿfar, al-Qummī. ***The Qummis accused him of ghulw,*** *but his ḥadīth are pure, there is no corruption in them.*

I have not seen anything attributed to him that confounds the soul, except for pages in Tafsīr al-Bāṭin and what befits its ḥadīth, and I suspect it is a forgery upon him.

I saw a writing that came out from ***Imam Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. Muḥammad (al-Hadi) عليه السلام to the Qummis regarding his disassociation (barā'a) from what they defamed him by [and deemed good his beliefs and the nearness] of his station."***

محمد بن أورمة، أبو جعفر، القمي. اتهمه القميون بالغلو، وحديثه نقي لا فساد فيه، وما رأيت شيئا ينسب إليه تضطرب فيه النفس، إلا أوراقا في " تفسير الباطن " وما يليق بحديثه، وأظنها موضوعة عليه. ورأيت " كتابا " خرج من أبي الحسن، علي بن محمد (عليهما السلام) إلى القميين في براءته مما قذف به (وحسن عقيدته، وقرب) منزلته

- (Rijal al-Kashi, vol 2, page 547)

"I asked Aba al-Hasan al-Ridha, peace be upon him, about ***Hisham ibn al-Hakam, he said: He (may God have mercy on him) said: He was a sincere slave and <u>was harmed by his companions, out of envy from them."</u>***

سألت أبا الحسن الرضا عليه السلام عن هشام بن الحكم، قال: فقال (رحمه الله): كان عبداً ناصحاً وأوذى من قبل أصحابهحسداً منهم له .

Particularly involved in this phenomenon were Zurara (ra) and his companions. Anyone whose view they opposed - they considered him as a disbeliever, as this *mu'tabar* (authentic) hadith shows.

(Rijal al-Kashi, vol 2, page 789)

"***Indeed, the companions of Zurara used to consider as disbelievers all the others (apart from themselves)****, and likewise, the others used to consider them as disbelievers*."

لقد كان أصحاب زرارة يكفرون غيرهم، و كذلك غيرهم كانوا يكفرونهم

With these these false accusations ravaging the pious scholars of Shi'i community, the Imams had to emphasize Husn al-Dhan in an effort to put an end this phenomenon.

Such that if for example, a Shi'i states his belief is something - one must believe him even if others swear by Allah he believes otherwise. And it is not permissible to publicize against him what others say about him, when he denies it.

Something changed, however, during al-Ghayba al-Kubra (which took place in 941 CE).

The Buyid dynasty, of Zaydi persuasion, took over the Abbasid caliphate in 945 CE. It continued recognizing the legitimacy of the Abbasid caliphs and their symbolic power, due to the Sunni majority of Baghdad.

Being Zaydi, the Buyids were more concerned with maintaining their power (instead of religious polemical identity) and not creating tension with the Sunni majority. At the same time, they gave patronage in money and position to Twelver scholars to create a balance of power in society.

Both Sunni and Twelvers rivaled each other to gain the Buyids' power, and as the Twelvers sought to maintain their privileged positions and protection awarded by the Buyids.

Orientalist scholar Aun Hasan Ali in his paper *Imamite Rationalism in Buyid Era* (page 48) clarifies the above fact:

"*Mufid's later ruling reflects a process in which **Imamites sought to draw ideological lines between themselves and the Fatimids who threatened Baghdad politically, thus assuring their patrons of their benignity** and securing a place for themselves within a broader Islamic context.*"

Accordingly, to secure their place in society - Shi'a became more involved in debates with Mukhalifeen (theological opponents). However, they experienced a problem and that being that they were deprived of an Imam to actively guide them.

One of the problems was that the Mukhalifeen began mocking and criticizing the Shi'a for the fact that their Rijal works contained no real information about narrators - nothing about their biographies nor the books they authored.

Hence, Najashi mentions in the introduction of his Rijal book (the primary source in the methodology of Sayyid al-Khoei of 'Ilm al-Rijal) that the reason why he wrote his book is because:

The Mukhalifeen poked fun at the Shi'a, saying they have لا سلف لكم ولا صنف (No predecessors nor books). (Rijal al-Najashi, page 3)

Meaning nothing is known about the Shi'a predecessors nor the books they wrote.

Thus, Najashi wrote his book specifically focused on including biographical data on Shi'i narrators, which stems from the narrations

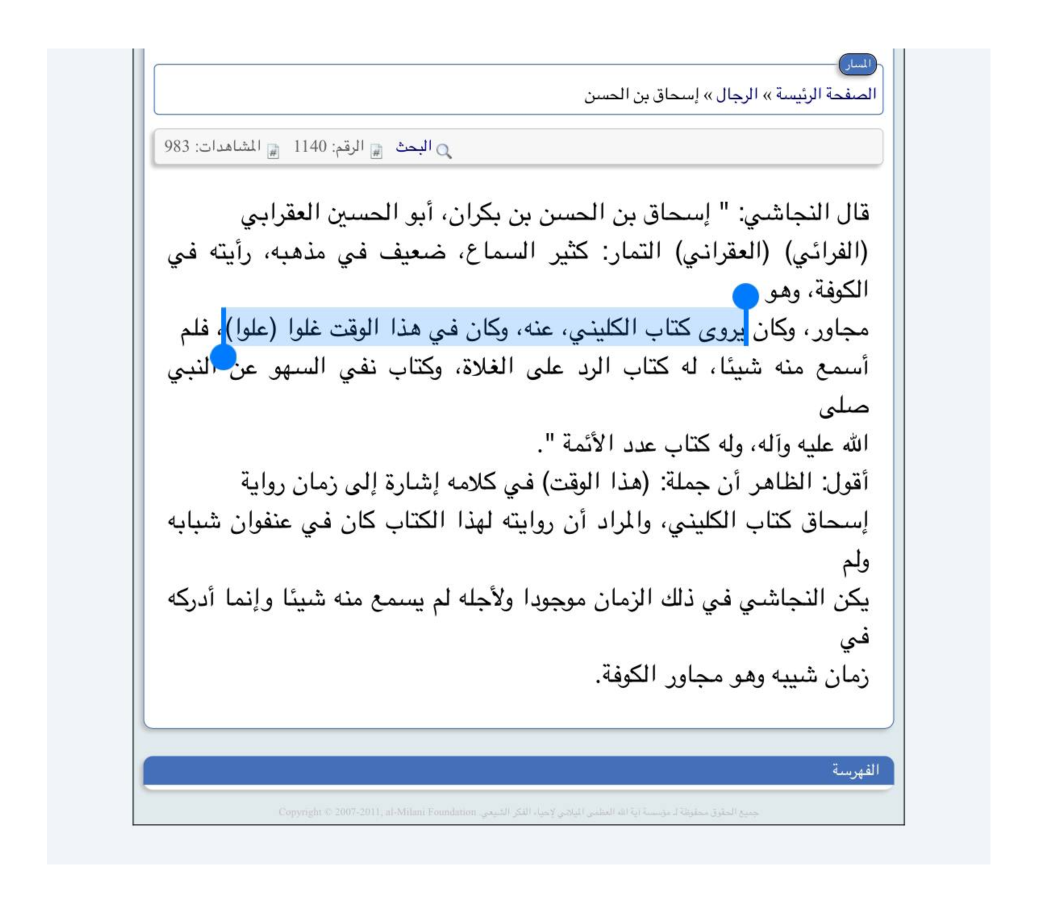
of other Shi’a (as seen from their lens, whether good or bad). And he would first offer his own grading on such narrators as well.

This is despite the fact that the Imams prohibited such behavior due to the disasters it caused in past.

And Najashi’s writing of his Rijal book **perpetuated another one of these disasters.**

To demonstrate:

In Najashi’s grading of Ishaq ibn al-Hassan, he calls this narrator weak because he narrated the book of al-Kulayni which according to Najashi a book of ghuluw!


المسار

الصفحة الرئيسة » الرجال » إسحاق بن الحسن

البحث الرقم: 1140 المشاهدات: 983

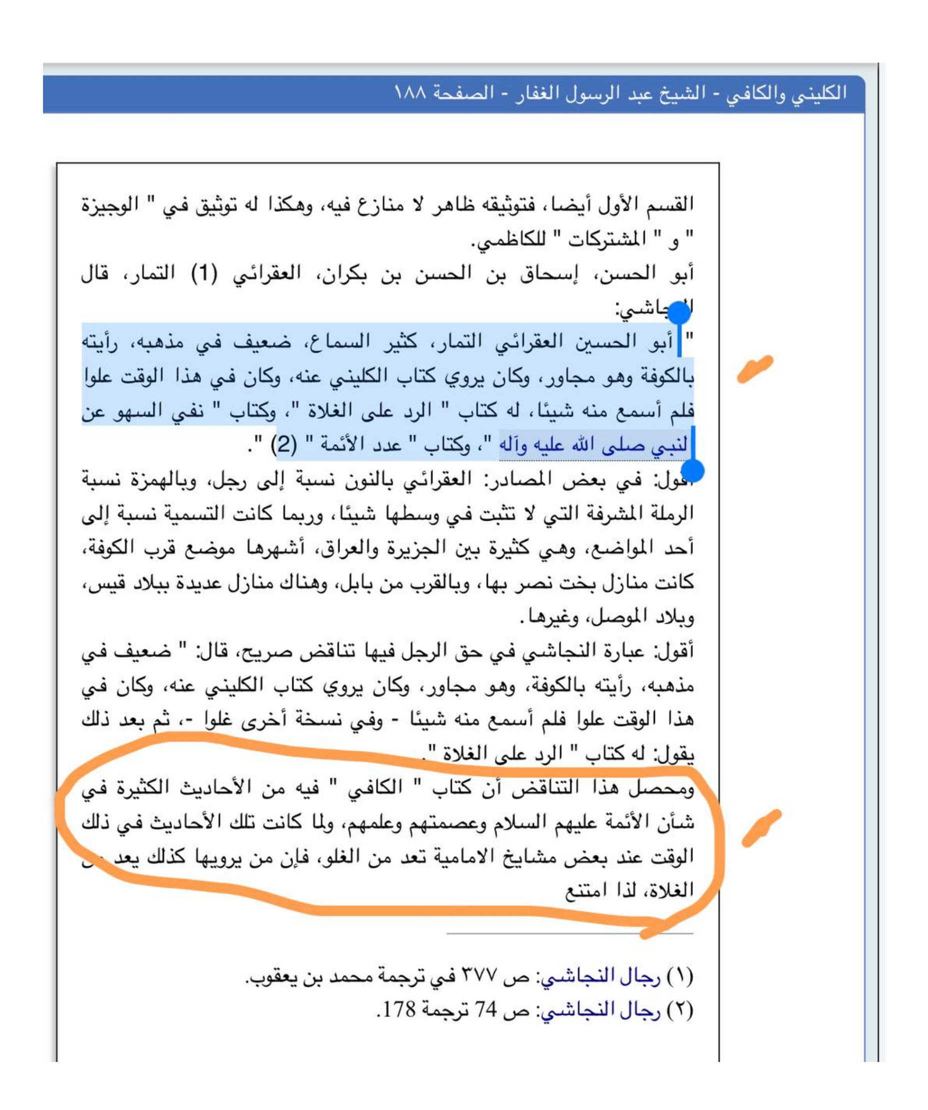
قال النجاشي: " إسحاق بن الحسن بن بكران، أبو الحسين العقرابي (الفرائي) (العقراني) التمار: كثير السماع، ضعيف في مذهبه، رأيته في الكوفة، وهو مجاور، وكان يروى كتاب الكليني، عنه، وكان في هذا الوقت غلوا (علوا)، فلم أسمع منه شيئا، له كتاب الرد على الغلاة، وكتاب نفي السهو عن النبي صلى الله عليه وآله، وله كتاب عدد الأئمة ".

أقول: الظاهر أن جملة: (هذا الوقت) في كلامه إشارة إلى زمان رواية إسحاق كتاب الكليني، والمراد أن روايته لهذا الكتاب كان في عنفوان شبابه ولم يكن النجاشي في ذلك الزمان موجودا ولأجله لم يسمع منه شيئا وإنما أدركه في زمان شيبه وهو مجاور الكوفة.

الفهرسة

This book of al-Kulayni described by Najashi as ghuluw, is our most reliable hadith compilation book to derive ahkam in Shi’ism - that is al-Kafi!

Shaykh Abdulrasul al-Ghaffar in his book *al-Kulayni wal Kafi* clarifies that Najashi classified al-Kafi as ghuluw due to the high station of the Imams being depicted, in addition to their infallibility and knowledge. These ahadith were considered by some Twelver sheikhs to be ghuluw.



الكليني والكافي - الشيخ عبد الرسول الغفار - الصفحة ١٨٨

القسم الأول أيضا، فتوثيقه ظاهر لا منازع فيه، وهكذا له توثيق في " الوجيزة " و " المشتركات " للكاظمي.

أبو الحسن، إسحاق بن الحسن بن بكران، العقرائي (1) التمار، قال النجاشي:

" أبو الحسين العقرائي التمار، كثير السماع، ضعيف في مذهبه، رأيته بالكوفة وهو مجاور، وكان يروي كتاب الكليني عنه، وكان في هذا الوقت علوا فلم أسمع منه شيئا، له كتاب " الرد على الغلاة "، وكتاب " نفي السهو عن لنبي صلى الله عليه وآله "، وكتاب " عدد الأئمة " (2) ".

أقول: في بعض المصادر: العقرائي بالنون نسبة إلى رجل، وبالهمزة نسبة الرملة المشرفة التي لا تثبت في وسطها شيئا، وربما كانت التسمية نسبة إلى أحد المواضع، وهي كثيرة بين الجزيرة والعراق، أشهرها موضع قرب الكوفة، كانت منازل بخت نصر بها، وبالقرب من بابل، وهناك منازل عديدة ببلاد قيس، وبلاد الموصل، وغيرها.

أقول: عبارة النجاشي في حق الرجل فيها تناقض صريح، قال: " ضعيف في مذهبه، رأيته بالكوفة، وهو مجاور، وكان يروي كتاب الكليني عنه، وكان في هذا الوقت علوا فلم أسمع منه شيئا - وفي نسخة أخرى غلوا -، ثم بعد ذلك يقول: له كتاب " الرد على الغلاة ".

ومحصل هذا التناقض أن كتاب " الكافي " فيه من الأحاديث الكثيرة في شأن الأئمة عليهم السلام وعصمتهم وعلمهم، ولما كانت تلك الأحاديث في ذلك الوقت عند بعض مشايخ الامامية تعد من الغلو، فإن من يرويها كذلك يعد من الغلاة، لذا امتنع

(١) رجال النجاشي: ص ٣٧٧ في ترجمة محمد بن يعقوب.
(٢) رجال النجاشي: ص 74 ترجمة 178.

Shall we go for العلم اليقين (the certain knowledge), that is the words of our Imams in al-Kafi, or the gradings of fallible men like Najashi - who is the very epitome of why the Imam prohibited publicizing disreputable information about other Shi’a.

The decision is yours, dear reader.

Taking Upon Wicked Shi'i Narrators

A question now that comes to mind of the reader would be:

What if the narrator is a bad, wicked, fasiq person? Even accursed?

Can we still take upon his narrations?

(Mukhtasar al-Basa'ir)

"*On the authority of Sufyan ibn al-Samt, he said: I said to Abi Abdilah (peace be upon him): May I be sacrificed for you.* ***A man before you comes to us who is known to lie, and he narrates the hadith, so we disdain it.***

*Abi Abdilah (peace be upon him) said: "**He tells you I said that the night is day, and the day is night."***

*I said, "**No**."*

*He [the Imam] said, "**If he told you this, I said it. If you accuse him of lying, you are accusing me of lying."***

حدثنا أحمد بن محمد بن عيسى، عن الحسين بن سعيد ومحمد بن خالد البرقي، عن ع
بد الله بن جندب، عن سفيان بن السمط (3)، قال: قلتلأبي عبد الله (عليه السلام): جعل
ت فداك يأتينا الرجل من قبلكم يعرف بالكذب فيحدث بالحديث فنستبشعه
فقال أبو عبد الله (عليه السلام):
" يقول لك: إني قلت الليل إنه نهار، والنهار إنه ليل؟ " قلت: لا، قال:
" فإن قال لك هذا إني قلته فلا تكذب به،فإنك إنما تكذبني "

- **Evaluation:**

Imam al-Sadiq clarifies that even if a hadith is strange in content and defies common knowledge (night is day, and day is night), and the narrator is accused of lying - one cannot deny his hadith. As a Shi'i

brother, one must have Husn al-Dhan that he will not lie upon the Imam and that the ‘strange’ content defying common knowledge is subject to interpretation, as the Imams are all-capable.

The following hadith of Imam al-Kadhim in al-Kafi, vol 8, p 125 clarifies:

ووال آل محمد ولا تقل لما بلغك عنا ونسب إلينا هذا باطل وإن كنت تعرف منا خلافه فإنك لا تدري لما قلناه وعلى أي وجه وصفناه

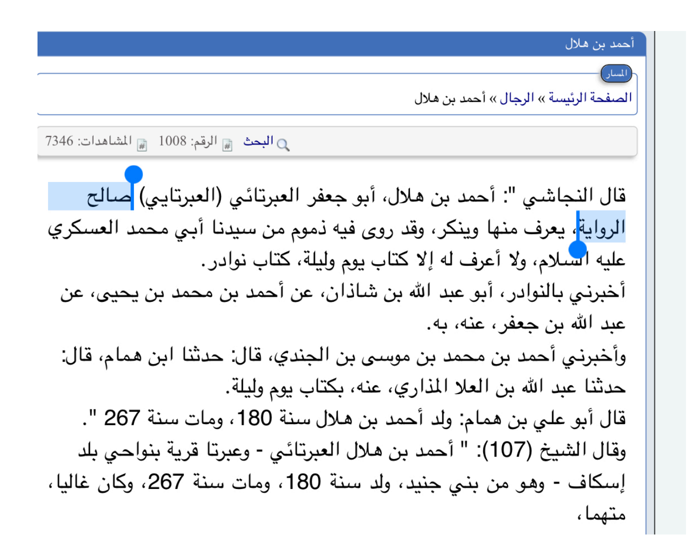
“*And follow the family of Muhammad,* ***and do not say what has reached you about us <u>and attributed to us</u>*****:** ***‘this is false’*** *-* ***even if you know from us the opposite****, as you do not* ***<u>why we said it</u>*** *and upon what perspective we described it.*””

The ahadith simply being attributed to the Imams - the Imams attribute them to themselves (hence the possessive phrase *‘why we said it*’), giving credibility to narrators simply because of their Shi’i-hood by the Imams claiming their narrations.

Even if these narrations contradict common knowledge (*‘even if you know from us the opposite’).*

As a similar but ironic example, Najashi classifies the narrator Ahmad ibn Hilal al-‘Ibirta’i as صالح الرواية (one whose narrations are valid).

Despite the fact that Ahmad ibn Hilal was one of the ghulat and was cursed by Imam al-Mahdi in a signed letter.


أحمد بن هلال

المسار

الصفحة الرئيسة » الرجال » أحمد بن هلال

البحث الرقم: 1008 المشاهدات: 7346

قال النجاشي ": أحمد بن هلال، أبو جعفر العبرتائي (العبرتايي) صالح الرواية، يعرف منها وينكر، وقد روى فيه ذموم من سيدنا أبي محمد العسكري عليه السلام، ولا أعرف له إلا كتاب يوم وليلة، كتاب نوادر.

أخبرني بالنوادر، أبو عبد الله بن شاذان، عن أحمد بن محمد بن يحيى، عن عبد الله بن جعفر، عنه، به.

وأخبرني أحمد بن محمد بن موسى بن الجندي، قال: حدثنا ابن همام، قال: حدثنا عبد الله بن العلا المذاري، عنه، بكتاب يوم وليلة.

قال أبو علي بن همام: ولد أحمد بن هلال سنة 180، ومات سنة 267 ".

وقال الشيخ (107): " أحمد بن هلال العبرتائي - وعبرتا قرية بنواحي بلد إسكاف - وهو من بني جنيد، ولد سنة 180، ومات سنة 267، وكان غاليا، متهما،

Najashi's classification is due to Ahmad ibn Hill being trustworthy in narration, even though he was a ghali and accursed by the Imam - proving that wickedness does not invalidate narrations.

The Ahadith of Weak Narrators

1. (Rijal al-Kashi, vol 2, page 662)

"*We were sitting with him (i.e, the Imam), so we discussed a man from among our companions, and some of us said:* ***He is a weak narrator.***

Abi Abdilah [al-Sadiq], peace be upon him, said: ***If you do not accept (reports) from those of lower level than you until they reach your level, we will not accept reports from you until you are on our level."***

683 - علي بن السرى الكرخي
محمد بن مسعود، قال: حدثنا محمد بن نصير، قال: حدثني محمد ابن عيسى .
وحمدويه، قال: حدثنا محمد بن عيسى، قال: حدثنا القاسم الصيقل، رفع الحديث إلى
أبي عبد الله عليه السلام، قال، كنا جلوسا عندهفتذاكرنا رجلا من أصحابنا فقال بعض
نا: ذلك ضعيف، فقال أبو عبد الله عليه السلام إن كان لا يقبل ممن دونكم حتى يكون م
ثلكم لم يقبلمنكم حتى تكونوا مثلنا.

2. (Al-Barqi's al-Mahasin,

"*On authority of al-Mufaddal ibn Umar, that Abi Abdilah (al-Sadiq) said:*
Allah created the believer from the greatness of his glory and power. ***Whomever accuses him of something - or denies his words, it is as if he denied God"***

- ***Evaluation***:

The two ahadith can be best understood when comparing then to the hadith below.

The hadith is narrated by two Babs (gates) of our Imams, his trusted ambassadors (sufara') to the Shi'a and represent the Imam in word and action.

Thus, it is not permissible to doubt their narrations

The hadith highlights to us several important things:

- **All ahadith of Al Muhammad (narrated by their Shi'a) are to be accepted**

- Ahadith which don't make sense are to be referred to 'scholar of Al Muhammad' - i.e, the Imam

- Being disgusted by and rejecting a hadith is a path to destruction

- **The denial of a hadith of Al Muhammad is kufr**

(Al-Kafi, vol 1, page 401)

"*Muhammad ibn Yahya, on the authority of Muhammad ibn al-Husayn, on the authority of **Muhammad ibn Sinan**, on the authority of Ammar ibn Marwan, **on the authority of Jabir**, who said Abu Jaafar, peace be upon him, said:*

The Messenger of God, may God's prayers and peace be upon him and his family, said:

The hadith of Al Muhammad is difficult. Only an angel of high degree of closeness (to God), a messenger prophet, or a slave (of God), whom God has tested his heart for faith.

So whatever what is narrated to you from the hadith of Al Muhammad, which your hearts accepted and you recognized him, then accept it

And whatever your hearts are disgusted by and you reject, refer it to God and to the Messenger and to the scholar from the family of Muhammad (i.e, the Imam).

And <u>indeed, the destroyed one is one who says: By God, this hadith cannot be true. By God, this hadith cannot be true.</u>

<u>Indeed, denial (of a hadith of Al Muhammad) is kufr."</u>

- محمد بن يحيى، عن محمد بن الحسين، عن محمد بن سنان، عن عمار بن مروان عن جابر قال قال أبو جعفر عليه السلام: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله إن حديث آل محمد صعب مستصعب لا يؤمن به إلا ملك مقرب أو نبي مرسل أو عبد امتحن الله قلبه للايمان، فما ورد عليكم من حديث آل محمد صلى الله عليه وآله فلانت له قلوبكم وعرفتموه فاقبلوه، وما اشمأزت منه قلوبكم وأنكرتموه فردوه إلى الله وإلى الرسول وإلى العالم من آل محمد وإنما الهالك أن يحدث أحدكم بشئ منه لا يحتمله، فيقول: والله ما كان هذا والله ما كان هذا، والانكار هو الكفر..

We get an idea that one should not be disgusted by a hadith, and thus placing doubt in the honesty of its narrator.

Because - regardless of the content of the hadith - the hadith may have indeed come from the Imam, and the isnad correctly attributed to the Imam (as hadith below suggests)

By denying a hadith of Al Muhammad for whatever reason - <u>such as rejecting the narrator (as clarified by hadith below)</u>, or being disgusted by the content -

We would risk kufr as denial of a hadith of Al Muhammad is kufr (as clarified by first hadith) and being out of the folds of Shi'ism (as clarified in second hadith).

(Al-Kafi, vol 2, page 223)

"I heard Abi Ja'far (peace be upon him) saying: By God, the most beloved of my companions to me is the most pious and knowledgeable of them and the most discreet in keeping our ahadith secret.

And the most hated to us is the one who hears a hadith being attributed to us and narrated from us - he is disgusted by it (i.e, the hadith), and denies it, ***and rejects the one believing in it.***

And he does not know - perhaps the hadith did in fact come from us, and its isnad correctly attributed to us.

And by that (i.e, his rejection) - he will be outside of our wilayah"

عنه، عن أحمد بن محمد، عن ابن محبوب، عن جميل بن صالح، عن أبي عبيدة الحذاء
قال: سمعت أبا جعفر (عليه السلام) يقول: والله إنأحب أصحابي إلي أورعهم وأفقههم
وأكتمهم لحديثنا وإن أسوأهم عندي حالا وأمقتهم للذي (4) إذا سمع الحديث ينسب إل
ينا ويروىعنا فلم يقبله اشمأز منه وجحده وكفر من دان به وهو لا يدري لعل الحديث من
عندنا خرج وإلينا أسند، فيكون بذلكخارجا عن ولايتنا .

This is why our Imams' companions believed rejecting any hadith which was merely attributed to Al Muhammad by their Shi'a to be impermissible.

(Rijal al-Kashi, vol 2, page 803)

"I wrote to him [Imam al-Ridha]:

May I be your ransom, we have a people who differ in the ma'rifa of your virtues - with different sayings which disgusts the hearts and bring distress.

And they narrate hadiths about that, it is not permissible for us to acknowledge them because of the great saying that they contain, ***and it is not permissible to reject them, nor to deny them when they were attributed to your forefathers."***

الكشي: وجدت بخط جبرئيل بن أحمد الفاريابي حدثني موسى بن جعفر ابن وهب عن إبراهيم بن شيبة قال: كتبت إليه جعلت فداك إن عندناقوما يختلفون في معرفة فضلكم بأقاويل مختلفة تشمئز منها القلوب وتضيق لها الصدور ويروون في ذلك الأحاديث لا يجوز لنا الاقرار بها لمافيها من القول العظيم ولا يجوز ردها ولا الجحود لها إذ نسبتu إلى آبائك، فنحن وقوف عليها من ذلك لأنهم يقولون ويتأولون معنى قوله عزوجل: " إن الصلاة تنهى عن الفحشاء والمنكر (3) " وقوله عز وجل:

- ***Note:***

When the companions say "*we cannot acknowledge them*", it is not saying they are rejecting the ahadith.

In fact, the companions explicitly clarified they cannot reject nor deny the ahadith.

Rather, they telling the Imam - "*we are performing tawaqquf (cease to act) on the hadith until you (oh imam) clarify it for us*".

This goes in line with the first hadith cited which instructs that in cases of being 'disgusted' by a hadith, one must return the hadith to the "scholar of Al Muhammad" (Imam) to clarify it."

Does the fact it's not permissible to reject a hadith because of its narrator mean a narrator cannot lie or at the very least superimpose his own subjective worldview onto ahadith?

No, a narrator is not infallible. It is possible for a narrator to lie and present his own worldview, but to what extent is *Husn al-Dhan* mandated while knowing this? And in what shape do these lies manifest, i.e; are they outright forgeries or wrong interpretations?

<u>What if a Narrator Lies?</u>

Before answering the above questions, we have to reinforce our understanding of the nature of Shi'i ahadith.

Orientalist scholar Seth Lauchlin Carney in his paper *Early Shi'i Mysticism* (page 76) makes the following assertion regarding Shi'i ahadith:

"It seems that the ***large majority of narrations ultimately refer to written sources****, which is an important factor in dealing with the organic connection between the extant literature we have and the more ancient period,* ***since it both reduces the probability of transmission error and makes it more likely that a forger would have been caught (since at the time, others could have easily checked the references given)****. Of course, the possibility of forgery remains under all circumstances.*"

This confirms what I have mentioned earlier in this booklet that the primary route of transmission in Shi'i ahadith was through written sources. A forger would not have plausible deniability if he misattributes a hadith to someone, and the hadith is checked with the person he attributes it too. The forger would be caught easily.

This also reduces the chances of *transmission errors,* or one of the narrators misattributing a hadith to someone. As the name would be recorded on a written source, reducing the possibility of a lapse in memory.

Knowing this, how would the companions of al-Mughira ibn Sa'id have allegedly inserted lies onto the hadith notebooks of the companions of Imam al-Baqir, as seen below?

(Rijal al-Kashi, vol 2, page 491)

"Aba Abdillah عليه السلام *said: al-Mughira b. Sa'id used to lie purposely about my father and take the books of his [al-Baqir's] companions –* ***and his [Mughira's] companions were under cover [indistinguishable] among the companions of my father – they would take the books from the companions of my father and send them to al-Mughira – so he used to interpolate into them Kufr [disbelief] and Zanadiqa [heresy] and attribute it to my father, then he would send them [the books] back to his companions and order them to establish them among the Shia****, so whatever is in the books of the companions of my father – of Ghulu [exaggeration of the status of the 'Aimma] – then that is what was interpolated by al-Mughira b. Sa'id in their books."*

عن هشام بن الحكم أنه سمع أبا عبد الله عليه السلام يقول: كان المغيرة بن سعيد يتعمد الكذب على أبي، و يأخذ كتب أصحابه و كان أصحابه المستترون بأصحاب أبي يأخذون الكتب من أصحاب أبي فيدفعونها إلى المغيرة فكان يدس فيها الكفر و الزندقة و يسندها إلى أبي ثم يدفعها إلى أصحابه فيأمرهم أن يثبتوها في الشيعة، فكلما كان في كتب أصحاب أبي من الغلو فذاك ما دسه المغيرة بن سعيد في كتبهم

Reading this hadith, we arrive at a picture of al-Mughira's companions taking the books of Imam al-Baqir's companions and interpolating heresy in them.

How could they interpolate such lies onto the Imams' books - whereas a forgery, as clarified above, can be easily caught.

To understand this, we have to discern the nature of these widespread lies attributed to the Imams.

(Rijal al-Kashi)

"I heard Abu Abdullah, peace be upon him, one day - as Al-Fayd ibn Al-Mukhtar entered upon him and he mentioned to him a verse from the Book of God Almighty which then Abu Abdullah, peace be upon him, interpreted.

Al-Fayd said:

May God make me your ransom, what is this difference between your Shiites?

He said: What is the difference, O Fayd?

Al-Fayd said to him: I am sitting in their circles in Kufa, so I almost doubt (my faith) due to their differences in their hadith until I return to Al-Mufaddal Ibn Umar, and he will sate me with that which my soul is comfortable with and my heart is at ease.

Abu Abdullah, peace be upon him, said:

Yes, it is as you mentioned, Fayd. ***People are preoccupied with lying to us.***

I speak to one of them with a hadith and he does not leave me until he interprets it in a way other than its interpretation."

قال: سمعت أبا عبد الله عليه السلام يوما - ودخل عليه الفيض بن المختار فذكر له آية من كتاب الله عز وجل يأولها أبو عبد الله عليه السلام - فقال له الفيض: جعلني الله فداك ما هذا الاختلاف الذي بين شيعتكم؟ قال: وأي الاختلاف يا فيض؟ فقال له الفيض: إني لأجلس في حلقهم بالكوفة فأكاد أن أشك في اختلافهم في حديثهم حتى أرجع إلى المفضل ابن عمر فيوقفني (1) من ذلك على ما تستريح إليه نفسي وتطمئن إليه قلبي، فقال أبو عبد الله عليه السلام: أجل هو كما ذكرت يا فيض إن الناس أولعوا بالكذب علينا، إن الله افترض عليهم لا يريد منهم غيره، وإني احدث أحدهم بالحديث فلا يخرج من عندي حتى يتأوله على غير تأويله

- **Evaluation:**

The nature of widespread lies attributed to the Imams now becomes clear. It is through wrong interpretations that were interpolated onto hadith.

While the interpretation is attached to the hadith, it is simple to distinguish between the hadith itself and its interpretation.

To demonstrate:

(Al-Kafi, vol 1, page 340)

"Ibn Bukayr narrated that Zurara had said: I heard Abu Ja'far al-Baqir (as) saying: "Al-Qa'im disappears before his rising." I asked: "Why?" ***He (the Imam) said: "He fears"*** *and he pointed with his hand at his abdomen.* ***He (the Imam) meant "fearing to be killed".***

One of the narrators of the hadith interpolated his understanding of the Imam's words onto the hadith, saying "He (Imam) meant 'fearing to be killed'".

The interpretation could be right or wrong, and it can present the personal worldview of the narrator, which can be misleading.

This can be seen in a hadith in al-Kafi, vol 2, page 402 - where one of the narrators, unsatisfied with the Imam's response which favored the narrator's interlocutors in a debate, attempted to save face in the hadith and interpreted the Imam's scolding to be directed towards another companion:

"***Indeed, it is evil for you (O Shi'a) to say what you have not heard from us.***

He (narrator said): I believer he was directing his words to Muhammad ibn Muslim (i.e, the interlocutor)"

The muhaqiq (editor) of this al-Kafi copy makes the following comment regarding the narrator's words above:

"***Rather, the narrator was satisfied with the Imam telling him the truth, because he understood from him that he was telling him contrary to his opinion, and he was exposed in front of his opponents.***

But perhaps in himself he returned to the truth and took upon the Imam's words."

إنما لم يرض الراوي باخباره (عليه السلام) بالحق لأنه فهم منه انه يخبره بخلاف رأيه فيفضح عند خصميه ولعله في نفسه رجع إلى الحق ودان به

The narrator's wrong worldview is superimposed onto the hadith, but the narrator's words are clearly distinguished from the hadith.

Now, if we are taking on the idea that al-Mughra ibn Said's companions interpolated onto existing hadith books of our Imams' companions and returned them back.

It is not as if they could erase the words and fabricated a hadith from scratch, this was not a possible technology.

Rather, they would have interpolated interpretations such as saying "The Imam meant this and this in the hadith".

The possibility of doing this is why Imam al-Askari ordered his Shi'a to take upon the ahadith of Banu al-Faddal (clan of scholars) but to leave aside their views (i.e, how they interpreted these ahadith).

(Al-Tusi's al-Ghayba, vol 1, page 411)

"*Abu Al-Hussein bin Tammam said: Abdullah Al-Kufi, the servant of Sheikh Al-Hussein bin Rouh, may God be pleased with him, told me:*

The Sheikh - meaning Abu al-Qasim (al-Husayn ibn Ruh, 3rd safeer of Imam al-Mahdi), may God be pleased with him - was asked about the books of Ibn Abi Al-Azzaqer after he was vilified and cursed, them.

So (al-Husayn ibn Ruh) he was told: How do we work with his books and our homes from them full? He said:

I say in it what Abu Muhammad al-Hasan ibn Ali, may God's prayers be upon them both, said, ***when he was asked about the books of Banu al-Faddal.***

When it was said to him: How do we act with their books and our houses are filled with them?

He, may God's prayers be upon him, said: "Take upon what they have narrated and leave aside their views.'"

وقال أبو الحسين بن تمام: حدثني عبد الله الكوفي خادم الشيخ الحسين بن روح رضي الله عنه، قال: سئل الشيخ - يعني أبا القاسم رضي الله عنه - عن كتب ابن أبي العزاقر بعدما ذم وخرجت فيه اللعنة، فقيل له: فكيف نعمل بكتبه وبيوتنا منها ملاء؟ فقال:

أقول فيها ما قاله أبو محمد الحسن بن علي صلوات الله عليهما وقد سئل عن كتب بني فضال، فقالوا: كيف نعمل بكتبهم (1) وبيوتنا منها ملاء؟.
فقال صلوات الله عليه: " خذوا بما رووا وذروا ما رأوا

With all that said, is it possible no fabrication completely out of air happened?

The difficulty of doing so due to the written nature of Shi'i ahadith does not mean a fabrication is completely impossible.

However, the Quranic and hadith principle of Husn al-Dhan means that we have to forego our natural instinct to doubt, out of theological premise.

For example, am I going to automatically doubt the purity of a Muslim brother's hands if he offers to shake my hand?

If I know him to be unhygienic, I still would not have doubt that he dipped his hands in a ritually unclean substance and intentionally comes to shake my hands.

Whereas with a Buddhist, we are not obliged to have Husn al-Dhan and such doubt about his purity would be the given.

Wa Allahu A'lam